



General Assembly

Substitute Bill No. 7407

January Session, 2007

* HB07407LM 050907 *

**AN ACT CONCERNING A DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION CITIZENS
ADVISORY GROUP AND THE RIGHTS OF INMATES WITH MENTAL
ILLNESS.**

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General
Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective July 1, 2007*) (a) The Commissioner of
2 Correction shall establish a Citizens Advisory Group to review and
3 report on the policies and practices of the Department of Correction
4 and recommend reforms in such policies and practices or legislation,
5 or both, where warranted. The advisory group shall be composed of a
6 diverse, cross-section of the community and include, but not be limited
7 to, former prisoners, family members of current or former prisoners,
8 faith community leaders and other community leaders, correctional
9 wardens or superintendents, correctional officers and correctional
10 health care providers. The commissioner shall appoint the members of
11 the advisory group for specified terms. The advisory group shall meet
12 not less than quarterly.

13 (b) The advisory group shall annually prepare a report of its
14 findings and recommendations with respect to department policy and
15 practice, including any recommendations for legislation, and shall
16 hold a public hearing thereon. Not later than January fifteenth of each
17 year, the advisory group shall submit such annual report to the
18 Governor and the General Assembly in accordance with section 11-4a
19 of the general statutes.

20 Sec. 2. (NEW) (*Effective October 1, 2007*) (a) Any inmate confined in a
21 correctional facility of the Department of Correction who has been
22 diagnosed with a mental illness by a psychiatrist licensed pursuant to
23 chapter 370 of the general statutes and who has been determined by
24 such psychiatrist to be dangerous to himself or herself or others shall
25 receive individualized, clinically appropriate and culturally competent
26 mental health services to assess and treat such inmate's condition.

27 (b) Any inmate confined in a correctional facility of the Department
28 of Correction shall have the opportunity to submit confidential written
29 requests for mental health services seven days a week and to be
30 interviewed by qualified mental health professionals or mental health
31 staff in a setting that provides reasonable privacy from being
32 overheard by other inmates and custodial staff who are not mental
33 health staff members.

34 (c) All custodial staff members at each correctional facility of the
35 Department of Correction shall receive not less than sixteen hours of
36 training on mental health issues each year. Such training shall consist
37 of classroom instruction and written materials provided by qualified
38 mental health professionals in conjunction with a training academy
39 accredited by the American Correctional Association, and shall
40 include, at a minimum: (1) Prevention of suicide and self-injury; (2)
41 recognition of signs of mental illness; (3) communication skills for
42 interacting with inmates with mental illness; and (4) alternatives to
43 disciplinary action and the use of force when dealing with inmates
44 with mental illness.

45 (d) Before the release of any inmate diagnosed with a mental illness
46 as provided in subsection (a) of this section from a correctional facility,
47 the Department of Correction shall collaborate with the Judicial
48 Department, the Department of Social Services and the Department of
49 Mental Health and Addiction Services as necessary to assist such
50 inmate in obtaining housing, mental health treatment services, any
51 public benefits for which the inmate is eligible and employment
52 counseling upon the inmate's release.

53 (e) On February first of each year, the Commissioner of Correction
54 shall submit a report to the joint standing committees of the General
55 Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to the judiciary, public
56 health and appropriations and the budgets of state agencies that shall
57 set forth (1) the number of inmates who are diagnosed with a mental
58 illness as provided in subsection (a) of this section, and (2) a
59 description of the services provided pursuant to subsections (b) and
60 (d) of this section.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>July 1, 2007</i>	New section
Sec. 2	<i>October 1, 2007</i>	New section

JUD *Joint Favorable Subst.*

LM *Joint Favorable*